

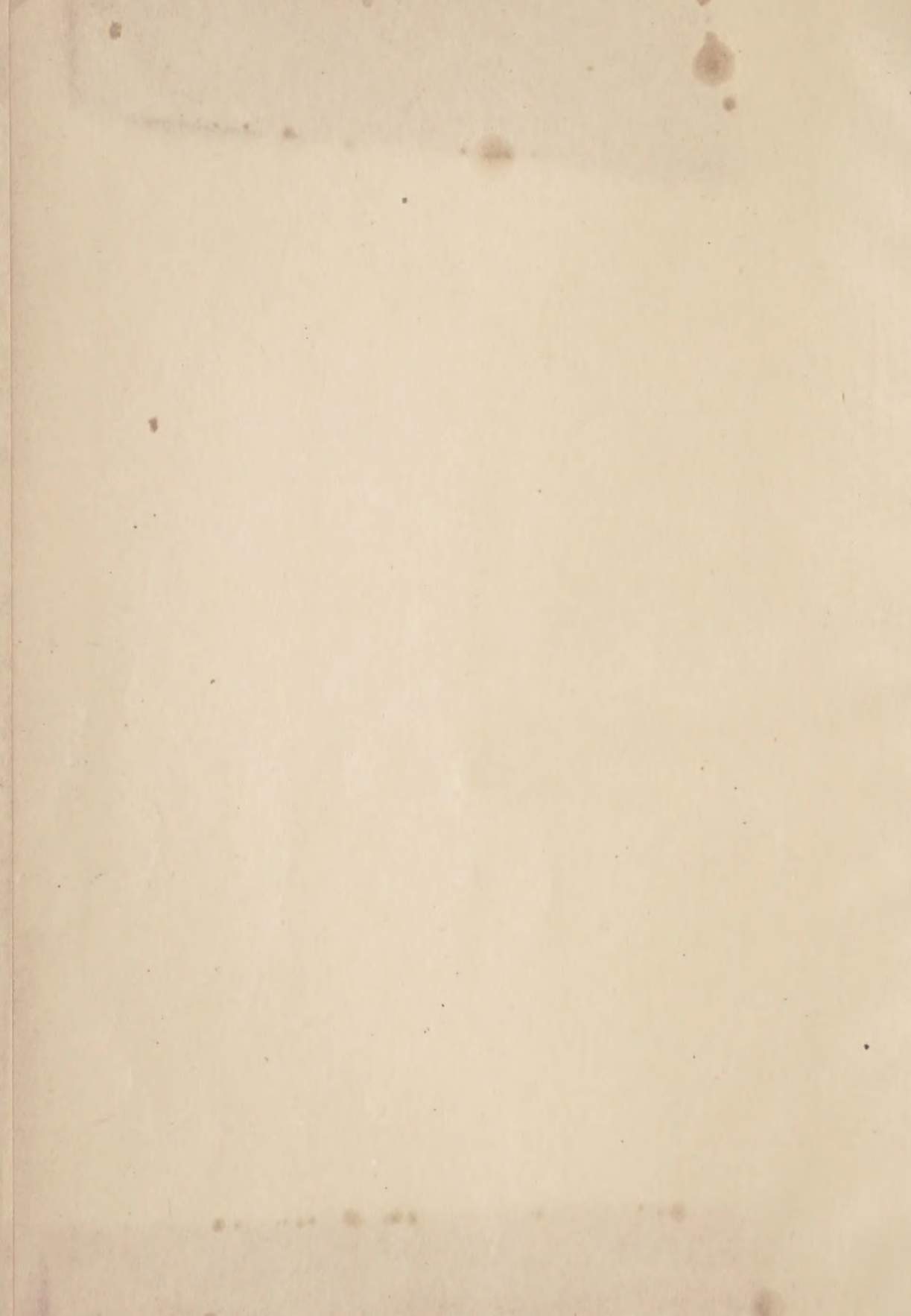
THE ROSE DALE BOOKS



EASY READING
FOR THE DEAR LITTLE ONES









ROSE CROSSING THE BROOK. Page 10.



IDA AND BABY BELL.

SECOND OF THE ROSE DALE BOOKS.

EASY READING

FOR THE DEAR LITTLE ONES.

BY

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AUTHOR OF "PUSSY TIP-TOES' FAMILY," "FRISK AND HIS FLOCK," "STORIES OF
CORA'S CHILDHOOD," "UNDER THE SKYLIGHT, AND OTHER STORIES FOR
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IDA AND BABY BELL.

(5)



I.

THE NEW BOOK.

I HAVE writ-ten one book to tell you, dear lit-tle ones, a-bout some chil-dren who lived at Brook-side, Rose, and Tom, and Ned Dale.

But I have more to tell, which I think you will like to read; so I

will make a new book, as I said I would.

Try to read it all by your-self, each one of you; for it is just for this that I put what I have to say in short words, and your good friend at the book-store will have these books made in nice, clear print, that you can read with ease.

When you find what fun it is to read a book all by your-self, you will want to try it a-gain, and not wait un-til some one can sit down to read to you.

But I dare say you want to get to the sto-ry now ; so I will stop this talk.

May be you would like to be told, in the first place, what the pic-ture in the front of this book means.

It is a pic-ture of the brook which ran at the foot of the hill, back of Mr. Dale's house.

It was a sweet, clear brook, and the chil-dren all loved to run down and see it, and play be-side it.

Some-times, in the spring, it

was quite high; but at most times in the year it was low, so low that Rose and Tom could cross it on the big stones which lay in its bed.

Their mam-ma did not fear at a-ny time to let them go down to the brook, if Tray, the dog, were with them.

That is Rose, whom you see in the pic-ture. She is go-ing to cross the brook, on the stones, for the fun of it, and then come back a-gain.

She seems to be a-lone. But

you may be sure, though we do not see them in the pic-ture, that Tom and lit-tle Ned are not far off.

The name Brook-side was giv-en to the place where these chil-dren lived, be-cause of this brook.

II.

THE FALL OF THE YEAR.

IF you read the first book, you will know that, when we left off, Rose and the lit-tle boys had had a sad time with the hoop-ing cough.

For a long time they could not go to church, nor go in-to the town to see their dear Aunt Kate ; and Tom was so sick with it, that for some days they were in fear that he would not get well.

These sad days were o-ver now ; and the dear lit-tle ones at Brook-side were well as ev-er, thanks to the good God who had kept them from harm.

The bright, warm days of summer were gone, too, by that time. Now, the wind was cold, and the leaves fell from the trees, and the days grew short.

But the chil-dren did not mind this ; they found much to please them out-of-doors, and, with good warm sacks on, they did not mind

the wind; as Rose said, "it was nice to run a race when the sun did not burn them so."

The two kits which these children had for pets, Net and Snow, had got to be quite large now. Old Puss gave up the care of them some time before, and would have no more to do with them. If they came near to play with her, she would growl at them, and lift her paw to give them a box on the ear.

Rose said, "I hope my mam-ma

will not send me off so, when I get to be a big girl."

But the two kits did not mind it much. For a few days they did sit and look at old Puss, as if they *did* wish she would let them come to her; but soon they did not care for her a-ny more than she cared for them, and were as full of play and tricks as they could be.

That is the way with cats. But your mam-ma will care for you all her life, and I hope, when you grow up, you will care for her, *more* than you do now.

“I wish we could see Spot,” said Rose, one day; “I wonder if she is as large as our two kits!”

Spot was a kit-ty which they had giv-en to their Aunt Kate’s lit-tle girl.

Mam-ma was near, and heard Rose say this.

“I think we will go and see,” said she; “would you like to go and spend a day at Aunt Kate’s now?”

Rose was in high glee at this; she did not know that her Aunt

Kate had got home. She had been out of town for two or three weeks, with Ida, her lit-tle girl.

Rose's mam-ma told her they would all go the next day, if it were fine. Ned was full of joy, too, at this, and they both ran to find Tom, and tell him all a-bout it.

III.

THE DAY IN TOWN.

THE next day was a clear, fine day as need be.

Mam-ma and the lit-tle ones were to go in by the train, when pa-pa went to his store; so they all had to be up in good time that morn-ing. But Jane did not find it hard to wake them that time.

The chil-dren were glad they were to go in the cars, for it was

quite a treat to them; they did not of-ten go that way, but drove in, with old Dick.

Ned was half a-fraid when the cars be-gan to move, for he could not see what made them go; but he saw Tom laugh; so he felt it was all right, and he be-gan to laugh, too.

When they got in-to the town they went right to Aunt Kate's; and O, how glad she was to see them!

“Now, where is I-da, Aunt

Kate? O, we do want to get hold of her; we can't wait."

"Well, run and find her; I think she just went down, with Spot in her arms, to get her some 'mik,' as she calls it."

Rose, and Tom, and lit-tle Ned most fell ov-er each oth-er, in their haste to get down the stairs.

The door of the room was o-pen, and there, to be sure, was dear lit-tle I-da, down on her hands and knees, look-ing at kit-ty as she took her milk.



The shout that the chil-dren gave made her jump up ; she forgot kit-ty then in her joy at seeing Rose, and Tom, and Ned once more.

But when they had all kissed

each oth-er as much as they could stand, Rose ran and took Spot in her arms, and gave her a good hug.

“You dear old kit!” she said; “how nice and fat you are! Why, I-da, you have tak-en good care of her, I see!”

“Yes, I gives her mik all the days!” said the lit-tle girl.

“Come up and take off your things, chil-dren!” they heard their mam-ma call.

“Let’s take Spot, too,” said Ned.

When they were all right for a good play, they had to look at all I-da's new toys, for her birth-day had been a few weeks be-fore, and she had a good ma-ny gifts.

Then Aunt Kate came and said, "she knew they must want something to eat, for lit-tle folks were not apt to eat much when they were starting off."

"Yes, *I* do," cried Ned; "I want some-fing real good, Aunt Kate."

Rose said, "O, Ned!" and shook her head at him; but Aunt Kate

laughed, and said, "He tells the truth, I know!"

So she drew out a small, round table, and set out a little feast for them, — some nice, red apples, and little sponge cakes, and sticks of white candy.

I-da's doll was set up on a seat, and Spot, too, at the table; but Spot would not stay; she had had so much milk, that she did not care a bit for fruit and candy.

But, O, dear! I can-not tell you all that these four happy tots said

and did that day, for it would take too much time.

The day was all too short for them; and they all cried out, "O, dear!" when their pa-pa came and said it was time to start for home.

But Aunt Kate said, "Never mind; it will not be long, I hope, be-fore you come a-gain."

"We shall come on Sun-days, now we are all well," said Rose.

"Yes, dear, you will come on Sun-days, and some play-days, too, I hope."

IV.

THE NEW FRIENDS.

A SMALL new house had been built near Mr. Dale's place, a-bout half way to Mr. Ray's.

In the time that the chil-dren were sick, this house was all done, and the folks came to live in it.

These were Mrs. Bond and her chil-dren. There were two lit-tle girls, one not much old-er than Rose, and one grown-up girl — Miss El-la.

Mrs. Dale went to call on them as soon as she could; but it was some time be-fore the chil-dren saw a-ny one from the new house.

At last, one day, Mrs. Bond and Miss El-la came to call.

Rose and Tom were in the room. They knew they must be still when mam-ma had calls, and not talk, or play, or make a noise in the room.

So they were not sent out of the room, as *some* lit-tle folks must have been, if they had been there!

Rose and Tom liked to stay, for these new friends spoke to them in a ver-y kind way; and then Miss El-la had such a sweet, kind face, that they liked to look at her.

When Mrs. Bond said they must go, Miss El-la turned to the lit-tle folks, and said, "Will you not both come and see my lit-tle sis-ters? They will be so glad to see you, for they feel lone-ly, some-times, in our new home."

"May we, mam-ma?" said Rose.

"Yes, dear, to be sure you may, if they would like to see you."

“What are their names?” said Tom.

“One is named Lu-cy, and the oth-er we call A-my.”

“I like those names,” said Tom.

“Then I hope you will like the lit-tle girls that own them,” said Miss El-la, with a smile.

When they were gone, Rose said, “I think Miss El-la is real nice ; don’t you, mam-ma ? And Mrs. Bond, too.”

“Yes, dear, I like them ver-y much, what I have seen of them.”

“Mam-ma,” asked lit-tle Tom, “why do they wear all black things? Why don’t they wear nice, blue frocks, like yours?”

“Black is worn by those who have lost some dear friend, my son. Mr. Bond, Miss El-la’s father, died last spring.”

“Is that why they have come here to live?”

“I think so, for one thing; but why do you ask?”

“O, ’cause I like them so much,” said Tom.

Mrs. Dale smiled, but did not say a-ny more then, and Rose and Tom soon ran off to play.

A few days af-ter this, mam-ma let Mike take the lit-tle ones, in the wag-on with two seats, for a nice treat.

They were to call and ask Lu-cy and A-my Bond to take a drive with them. And when they came back, their mam-ma said they might stop and see their lit-tle friends for an hour more, at their home.

Lu-cy and A-my were glad to go to ride. Miss El-la came out with them, and made them all feel at once as if they had been friends a long time, she spoke in such a fun-ny way.

How fast they did talk, as they drove a-long ! Did you ev-er hear five lit-tle tongues go all at once ? Then you know how it sounds.

And just think ! they saw lit-tle Ma-ry Ball, a lit-tle girl whom they had seen be-fore, who had a goat. Ma-ry knew them, and

was glad to see them ; and Nim, the goat, seemed as gay as ev-er.

Lu-cy and A-my had to be told all a-bout the goat, and they were pleased, too.

When they had been out a-bout an hour, they drove back to Mrs. Bond's. She came out to the gate, and told Mike she would like to have them stay to tea, if their mam-ma would let them ; and Miss El-la would see them home.

But Mike said he would come for them ; for it was quite dark

soon af-ter tea, at this time of the year.

Mrs. Dale told Mike they might stay, and he need not go for them till af-ter tea.

The chil-dren soon knew they might stay, as Mike did not come back at once. So they had a fine play-time; Lu-cy and A-my did all they could to please them, and by the time the vis-it was o-ver, they were just the best friends in the world.

V.

LIT-TLE NED'S WATCH.

ONE day Mike had to go in to town to the stores, with the wagon, and he asked if he might take Tom with him.

Mrs. Dale said he might go, for it was a fine, clear day, and she knew that Mike would take the best of care of him.

Then Ned cried to go, too; but his mam-ma said she could not let

her lit-tle wee boy go in that way, for Mike would have to run in-to this store and that, and Ned would be in his way, and might get hurt.

“See,” said she; “we will give Tom a ten cent stamp to spend for Ned, and one to buy some-thing for Rose, too; and then we will wait and see what they bring.”

Then Ned wiped his eyes, and smiled, for he thought it was fun for Tom to go to the shop to get some-thing for him.

“Won’t Tom have some to spend for him-self?” said Rose.

“Why, I shall have the ride, and all the fun, you see,” said Tom.

“But,” said Rose, “when you get in the shop, you will want just a *lit-tle* to buy some-thing your-self—won’t you? I’ll tell you, Tom; you buy some-thing for me with five cents, and spend the other five cents for your-self!”

“No,” cried Tom, “I won’t! I mean to buy some-thing for you that costs ten cents!”

"I can fix it, I think," said mam-ma; "here is a five cent bit that will just do for Tom to buy something for him-self with."

"O, thank you, mam-ma; that is just right!"

"Will Tom go to Aunt Kate's, and see I-da?" asked Ned.

"No, dar-ling, not to-day; Mike will not have time to go there. He will stop at pa-pa's store just a lit-tle while, may be."

Rose and Ned went out to see Mike get up the horse, and hitch

him to the wag-on. Then Tom came out, with his coat and cap on, and a warm scarf tied round his neck, and some red mit-tens on his hands, for mam-ma knew it would be cold rid-ing in the wind.

Then they drove off. Tom felt quite like a man as he went off with Mike to town, and Rose and lit-tle Ned felt lone-ly as they saw him go.

But just then mam-ma called them, and Rose sat down to her les-sons, and tried not to think of Tom till they were all done.

As for Ned, mam-ma let him take her box of black but-tons, and he played they were coal, and so he would load his cart with them, and draw it a-cross the room, to Miss May's house, and then dump it at her door. Then he would load his cart a-gain, and sell to some one else. So he had fine fun, all by him-self.

And so, be-fore they thought of it, Mike and Tom were at the gate, with a load of meal, and flour, and such things.

Tom gave a jump from the wagon, and ran in.

“Have you had a nice time?” asked Rose.

“O, yes! a grand time! And see here, what I got for you!”

For Rose, Tom had got a fun-ny lit-tle black doll, that made her laugh.

And for Ned he had got a toy watch, that made him jump for joy, it was so like a real watch.

Then Tom took out one more pa-per. “I got this with my five

cents," said he; "so we can each have a piece."

He had five sticks of can-dy, and he gave one to Rose, and one to Ned, and one to mam-ma, and one to Jane, who came by just then, and he had one him-self.

Tom was not a self-ish boy — was he?

Ned had to take his watch from his belt, to see what time it was, twice, or more, while he was eating his can-dy, and he was quite proud of it for an hour or two.

But, by and by, as they were all out at play in the yard, Ned said, "I don't see why my watch does not go 'tick, tick,' like pa-pa's.

"One day pa's watch did not go, and I saw him ope it, and poke it with his key.

"I mean to ope mine, and give it a poke. O, dear, now, I *can't* ope it!"

Ned turned to ask Tom to o-pen it for him, but Tom and Rose had gone down the walk, and he had been talk-ing to him-self all the time.

“O, I can ope it with a stone!” said Ned; and he took up a stone, and gave the poor watch such a hit as *did* ope it, and smash it, too!

There were no wheels in-side, to go round, and make the hands go; there was noth-ing of it but the back, and a pa-per face, with a glass o-ver it, and this Ned broke all to bits with his stone.

When the lit-tle boy saw what he had done, he be-gan to cry quite hard, and Tom and Rose ran back to see what was the mat-ter.



“O, O!” cried Tom; “you bad boy! what made you pound up that watch now, just as soon as I got it for you?”

“I ain’t a bad boy,” said Ned, with a sob; “I did want to ope it, to see if I could make it go, and it *broked!*”

Tom looked vexed; but as he was a-bout to speak, Rose said, “He did not mean to break it, I am sure, Tom; and he feels bad to see that it *is* brok-en. You must not be cross to him.”

“Can you mend it, Rose? Can mam-ma mend it?”

“No, we can’t mend it, Ned, dear; but never mind; we will go and see the kits now, and play with them.”

But Ned kept on cry-ing; he could not bear to think that his watch was gone.

Then Tom felt sor-ry for him, and he said, “O, come, Ned; let’s get our reins, and play horse; and, I’ll tell you! the next time I get ten cents to spend, I will get you

a new watch, and you won't smash *that* — will you ? ”

“No,” said Ned ; “I'll put it in my belt, and take good care of it.”

VI.

THE SCHOOL.

ONE day, when Rose and Tom came in to get their les-sons, their mam-ma said, “Chil-dren, how would you like to go to school?”

Rose and Tom looked up at her with wide o-pen eyes, and Tom said, —

“What is school, mam-ma? like what we play, when we make the dolls all sit up and hold their books?”

“Lit-tle chil-dren go to a real school, not dolls; dolls are block-heads at books, I think.

“School is a place where children go to learn their les-sons, with a teach-er, who gives his or her time to help them learn.”

“Do they have to sit up in a row, on a hard bench?” asked Rose.

“Why, no, not in all schools; not in the school to which you would go.”

“O, mam-ma,” said Rose, as she

put her arms round her mam-ma's neck, "*I* don't want to go to school; I want to say my les-sons to you, just as we do now; it is nice!"

"But, my love, I am not ver-y well, and some days I do not feel as if I could hear your les-sons; and you know I do not want you to leave them off, and play all the time."

Rose and Tom looked ver-y grave at this; they thought school must be a hard place, and they did not want to go.

“Will the teach-er be cross?” said Rose, at last.

“Why do you not ask who the teach-er is?” said mam-ma, with a smile.

“Who is it, mam-ma? No one that we ev-er saw — is it?”

“Miss El-la Bond is to be the teach-er.”

It would have made you laugh to see how the so-ber fa-ces grew bright at this.

“O,” cried Tom, “that is gay; I shall like her for a teach-er.”

“And so shall I,” said Rose;
“but how fun-ny, mam-ma! I did
not see a school at her house.”

“She has not be-gun it yet; it
is to be-gin next week.”

“Will Lu-cy and A-my be in
the school?”

“Yes, it was in part for their
sake that she made the plan; and
Nell and Fred Ray are to go, and
John Wilde, and his sis-ter.”

“O, it will be fun!” cried Tom.

“But, my boy, I hope you will
not go to school to make fun;

Miss El-la would not like such chil-dren in her school; she will want you to be good, and mind what she says to you, and try to learn well."

"Yes, I will, mam-ma; I did not mean that."

"I dare say you will have time to play at re-cess; and I hope you will find it nice to learn with other lit-tle folks.

"So you think, af-ter all, you will like to go to school?"

"O, yes, mam-ma, I know we

shall like Miss El-la's school, for she is as kind as you are, '*most*;' and she could not be cross."

"Then I think," said mam-ma, "I shall let you rest from your books for the rest of this week, so you may be-gin all fresh on Monday."

"O, thank you, mam-ma; that is nice, too," said Rose.

"What will Ned do when we are gone to school?" said Tom; "he can-not go, can he, mam-ma?"

"No, he is too young to go yet;

but we will try to make him happy while you are gone, and then he will be so glad to see you when you come home !”

The chil-dren had a great deal of talk a-bout the new school, and Ned heard them, but he did not think much of it ; he did not know what it was all a-bout.

On Sun-day, when they went to town, to go to church, they told Aunt Kate of the school, and she seemed glad to hear of it, and ver-y glad that they liked the plan.

“And my boy Ned,” said she, “will take care of his mam-ma, when Rose and Tom are off to school; won’t he?”

“Yes,” said Ned, “*course* I will.” And it made him feel quite like a man to think of it.

“Mam-ma did not feel well; so she could not come to-day,” said Rose; “and at first she said it would not do for Ned to come; but he *did* want to so much, that pa-pa said, ‘Let him go; I am sure he will be a good boy.’”

“So am I sure of it,” said Aunt Kate; “and, Ned, I-da is to go to church to-day, and I want you to show her how to sit still; will you?”

Ned was glad I-da was to go. He want-ed her to walk with him, and to sit by him; and, as he was to teach her to keep still, he tried to sit as still as a mouse him-self.

VII.

GO-ING TO SCHOOL.

MON-DAY came, and Rose and Tom were up in good time, and felt in great haste for the hour of school.

When they went in-to their mam-ma's room, to kiss her, she said, "My lit-tle ones are to be-gin a new way of life to-day; did you think to ask God to bless you in your school, and help you to

o-bey your teach-er, and to be kind to your school-mates ? ”

“ No, mam-ma,” said Rose ; “ I did not think of that.”

“ Nor I,” said Tom.

“ Then you may kneel by me, and ask Him now ; for you know we can do no good thing with-out the help of God.”

They did kneel down, and each said this prayer, af-ter their mam-ma : —

“ O God, bless me, and make me live as Thy own child, in

school and at home ; and keep me in all my ways. For Je-sus' sake. A-men."

When break-fast was done, Mike drove with their pa-pa to the cars, and when he came back, he let the horse stand a lit-tle while, till it was time for Rose and Tom to go to school ; for it had been rain-ing in the night, and the road was damp and mud-dy.

Mam-ma put up a nice lunch for them to eat at noon, for they were to stay at noon on wet days ;

then she put their read-ing books and slates in a bag she had made for them, and then it was time to start.

They went off feel-ing ver-y hap-py, for they were glad to go to Miss El-la's school.

But you know they need not have been a-fraid, if it had been some one else who was to teach them, for teach-ers are sure to love good chil-dren, those that mind what they say, and do their best to learn well.

Miss El-la had the back par-lor shut off, and fit-ted for her school-room. She did not need much to fit it, for she was not to have a large school, not more than ten or twelve chil-dren.

It was a bright, warm room — a nice place for lit-tle folks to stud-y in.

Most of the chil-dren were there when Tom and Rose got there.

Miss El-la gave them each a kiss, and led them to the seats they were to have.

She told them where to hang their things, and where to put their books and slates.

It was now nine; that was time for school to be-gin.

So Miss El-la rang a lit-tle bell, and told them when that bell rang they must all stop talk-ing, and look at her.

Then Miss El-la saw that each one had a Bi-ble who could make out to read a verse.

Fred Ray could not, and one lit-tle girl was too young to read yet.

Miss El-la found the place where they were to read, and had each one read a verse in turn.

When it was Tom's turn, or Nell Ray's, Miss El-la would help them, if there were hard words in the verse.

When the Bi-ble les-son was read, Miss El-la made them all kneel down, while she said a short prayer, and then they said the Lord's Prayer with her.

Then les-sons be-gan; but I need not tell you a-bout that part.

When the clock said half past ten, Miss El-la told them they were to have a lit-tle re-cess, and they might get up and play.

Then, when the bell rang, she had them sing a nice song with her, and then they had more lessons, till noon.

At noon, the rain came down hard ; so Nell and Fred Ray had to stay at school, too, and one or two oth-ers. But they thought that was fun, and were glad of the rain that time.

Be-fore school was out, it was clear, and the sun was out; so Rose and Tom could walk home as well as not.

VIII.

NED'S FIRST DAY A-LONE.

How did Ned like be-ing left to play alone? you will ask.

He looked af-ter Rose and Tom, as they drove off with Mike, with a ver-y so-ber face, as if he did not like it much.

But then he got down from the chair by the win-dow, and said, "Now I must take care of mam-ma; Aunt Kate said I must."

So he looked to see what he could do. First he ran and got a foot-stool for mam-ma to put her feet on. Then he said, "Shall I fix you spools all nice in your box, mam-ma?"

His mam-ma put her box down on a chair for him to work at, and said, "Yes, you may."

This kept him in work for some time; but I dare say mam-ma had to sort things o-ver a-gain, when he was done.

By and by he be-gan to be quite

tired of play-ing by him-self; it was a new thing for him, you see.

So his mam-ma thought she must take care of him now.

“Come here, my lit-tle man, and see what I have found!”

Ned ran to see. Mam-ma had found an old lock-et; once it had a braid of hair in it, but the hair was lost, and the lock-et was bent some.

“Do you think we can make a lit-tle watch of this for you?” said mam-ma.

“O, do, do, mam-ma,” cried Ned.

“It will not be a re-al watch, you know; but you will not pound it if it does not tick — will you?”

“No, mam-ma, I will just look at it, and play it said, ‘Tick, tick.’”

“Well, now let us see if we can make a face for it.”

So mam-ma got a stiff, white card, and cut out a round bit, that would just fit in the lock-et; then she made the numbers on it, as they are on the face of a watch,

and drew some hands, or point-ers, with her pen.

Then she bent the rim of the lock-et so as to take out the glass, and put the new face in, with the glass o-ver it, and it made a fine watch.

Ned said it was a gold watch ; it did look like gold, but it was not pure gold.

“Now, Ned,” said mam-ma, “you must look at your watch, and see when it is time for Rose and Tom to come home.”

“Yes, I will,” said the lit-tle boy; and he did look at it a good ma-ny times, and was so hap-py with it that he for-got to be lone-some.

When Rose and Tom came, Ned had to show his gold watch the first thing.

“Now, Tom, you need not buy me a watch when you get ten cents; you can buy some-fing for you own self!” said he.

Rose and Tom had some-thing to tell, too. They told their mam-

ma all a-bout the school, and how much they liked it; and she was glad they had such a kind and good teach-er.

IX.

THE CHIP-MUNK.

ONE day Mike came for Rose and Tom, when school was out. He had Ned with him in the buggy, and he had a warm shawl for Rose, and a thick scarf for Tom, and said they were to go to ride with him, if they wished to.

Of course they did; they felt just like it. Ask a-ny child, just as he comes out of school, if he

wants to go to ride, and see what he will say !

It was cold, but the sun was bright, and so they did not mind the cold air.

Mike drove in-to the woods; the leaves were al-most all off the trees, and lay in piles in the road — piles of bright red, yel-low, and brown leaves, like a gay car-pet on the road.

“ O,” cried Mike, “ see that chip-munk ! ”

“ Where ? ” said Tom, and Rose, and Ned, all at once.

“There, by the fence; now on that stump; now he is off a-gain! see him?”

“O, yes, *I* do!” “And I,” said Rose; “but I thought it was a squir-rel.”

“So it is, one kind of squir-rel; but that is what they call this fellow. Pat told me that where he was, out West, they have a kind, a good deal like this, and they call it a ‘go-go’ — what’s this it is now! O, it is a go-pher!”

If a-ny lit-tle folks out West



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get hold of this book, they will know what Mike was try-ing to say, in less time than it took him to think of the name; for I dare say they will have seen go-phers, lots of times.

“Has he got a nest, up in a tree, Mike? And has he got a heap of nice nuts in it?”

“No; sure this fel-low don't like to go up a tree much; I think it makes his head swim, like O-ney, when she goes up the lad-der, in the barn!”

“Then what will the poor chipmunk do in the cold win-ter?” said Rose.

“Ah, but he has a nest, nev-er fear, on-ly he did not put it up a tree. Sure it is down in the ground, some place, and he gets to it by a hole, a round hole that he has made, straight down, and then it winds round to his nest.”

“But, Mike, I don’t see how he gets his nuts and a-corns a-way down to his nest in the ground.”

“Wait a bit, till you get one

more look at him, and then you just mind his cheeks; sure they are like two bags, when he has some-thing to stuff in them. And he takes good care to get his share of corn a-way wid him, in those bags of his, the sly thief!”

The chil-dren kept a bright look-out, and they did see, or thought they saw, the chip-munk scud a-long on the oth-er side of the fence, but they could not see his cheeks.

That was a grand drive, and the

lit-tle folks were in high glee when they got home.

They all liked to go with Mike; he was sure to tell them some nice, fun-ny thing.

When their pa-pa came home, they told him of the chip-munk, and what Mike said a-bout it.

Rose tried to think of the name of the kind of squir-rel that Mike said was found in the West, much like the chip-munk.

She could not get a-ny more of it than "Go," but her pa-pa told

her at once what it was, for he had been out West.

“But there are two kinds of gopher,” said her pa-pa. “One is, as Mike said, ver-y like our chipmunk. But the oth-er, which they call the ‘pock-et go-pher,’ is the most of a rogue.

“He does much harm to the farm-ers, and he is so quick to hear a sound, and so spry, that he does not of-ten get ta-ken; indeed, he is not ver-y of-ten seen, but they see his work.”

“But, pa-pa,” said Tom, “what do they call him a pock-et go-pher for? Has he got a pock-et in his coat?”

“Yes, he has a pock-et, not in a coat, but un-der his *chin*; and he takes good care to keep it well filled.”

“O, what fun-ny things squirrels are, all of them!” said Tom.

“Some day, when you come to town, and are at my store,” said pa-pa, “I will take you in next door, to Mr. Howe’s, and ask him

to let you see his gray squir-rel; he has it in a cage, that goes round and round, as the squir-rel moves it with his feet.

“But he need not go round when he does not feel like it, and he has a nice lit-tle house to sleep in.”

“O, how I would like to see him. What is his name, pa-pa?”

“His name is Bun,
And now you may run,
And have some fun
At set of sun!”

“O, pa-pa, how fun-ny you are!”
cried Rose.

But they knew pa-pa meant that he did not want to talk a-ny more just then; so they ran off to play.

X.

THE FIRST SNOW.

“I THINK there will be snow to-night, or by morn-ing,” said Mike, as he came in with the pail of milk, one night.

Ruth took the milk-pail from his hand, and gave a look out at the door.

“Yes, I think so, too,” said she ;
“those clouds look like it, and there is such a chill in the air.”

Tom and Ned were both down stairs with Ruth, and Tom began to jump up and down for joy at the word "snow."

"Will you get my sled down, Mike, before you lock up the barn? so I can have it the first thing in the morn-ing, you know."

"Ah, sure you need not set your heart on a sled ride yet, my man. The first snow is apt to be light. At a-ny rate, I think I shall be at the barn in the morn-ing before you will want your sled."

“What is snow?” asked little Ned.

“O, ho! what a goose!” cried Tom; “don’t know what snow is!”

This made Ned feel bad. He said, “I *not* a goose, Tom.”

“No, you are not a goose,” said Ruth, “and Tom must not call you such a name.”

“You do not think, Tom, what a mite of a boy he was last winter, and he for-gets what it is like.”

“Well, Ned, I’ll tell you; snow is soft, cold, white stuff, that lies

on the ground, and makes it all white.

“Don’t you know my nice sled that hangs in the barn? I made you look up to see it, one day; it had a dog on it!”

“Yes,” said Ned, with a wise nod, “I know!”

“Well, that will go on the snow as fast — O, most as fast as Dick can go; and you shall have a ride on it.

“And then we can make balls of the snow, and throw them; and O, it is such fun!”

All this made Ned clap his hands and jump, too. "O, I wish the snow would come *now*," said he; "who will bring it? will a man bring a big cart-load of it, and dump it on the ground?"

"O, you fun-ny boy," cried Tom; "no, it comes down from the sky, like rain."

"Why, then God sends it to us, to play with — don't He?"

"Yes, God sends it," said Tom; but it was a new thought to him, that God sent the snow that he liked so much.

Then Ned ran to tell his mam-ma a-bout the snow. He had to tell all that Mike and Tom had said; and his eyes were as bright as stars, with joy.

Rose was by her mam-ma, and she was glad, too, to hear that there would be snow. But she did not care quite as much for the snow as Tom did; I do not think girls are apt to care for it as much as boys do — do you?"

"Mam-ma," said Rose, "if we should have deep snow, as we did

last win-ter, how could we get to school? I hope we shall not have to stay from school!"

"I do not think the snow will be so deep that Mike can-not get you to school, my dear; you need not fear that.

"Mike has more time to spare now than he has in the sum-mer; so he can take you as well as not."

XI.

THE SNOW-BIRDS.

WHEN Rose, and Tom, and Ned woke up the next morn-ing, the first thing they did was to spring out of bed, and look out to see if there was snow on the ground.

“O, yes, yes,” cried Tom; “see, Rose, the ground is all white, and the trees, and the fence. Look, Ned! *that* is snow!”

“O, Tom, if we could lift up the

win-dow, just a lit-tle, and get a bit of it from the sill, to show Ned! Let us both take hold, and see if we can!"

They did lift the win-dow, and get a bit of snow, to Ned's great joy. But they let in the cold, damp air, too, and it gave them a chill, as they stood there, with bare feet, in their night clothes.

Just then mam-ma heard them, and looked in.

"O, chil-dren!" cried she, "what *are* you do-ing? You will all take cold!"

“Get right back in-to bed, and get warm. Tom, my dear boy, you know you have a bad cold *now*; you were as hoarse as a bull-frog last night; I am a-fraid you will be sick!”

Tom crept back in-to the bed, and did not say a word.

His throat *did* feel ver-y sore, and he was a-fraid he would be sick, so that he could not play in the snow.

“Lie still,” said mam-ma, “and I will ask Jane to start a fire in this stove to dress you by.”

They did not have a fire to dress by, most days; there was a big stove in the hall, that made the rooms as warm as was good for them to sleep in; but Mrs. Dale felt sure they must be chilled, by stand-ing so long at the win-dow; and she was right.

When Jane came, she had a pan of coals, and some light wood, that soon made the stove roar.

“Now,” said she, “it is time to get up.”

Rose and Ned were not slow to mind.

“Why, Tom, what ails *you*? I thought you would be in great haste to get out in the snow!”

Tom tried to smile, as he sat up in bed; but the tears came in his eyes, and he said, “O, Jane! my throat hurts me so! and I don’t think I can go to school, or go out to play, at all.”

“School? why, there *is* no school to-day, my man! it is the last day of the week, and I hope your throat will soon be well, so you can play.

“Cheer up! if you can-not get out to play in *this* snow, there will soon be more!”

So Tom got up, and be-gan to dress. His mam-ma came in, and when Jane told her of his sore throat, she looked grave. Tom had been so sick in the fall, that she did not like him to have such a cold so soon a-gain.

She got a soft, warm band, and put some stuff on it, and put it round his throat. But Tom could not go out that day.

Rose said, "I am glad it is not school-day, Tom, so I can stay and play with you."

They sat by the win-dow, to look out at the snow. It had stopped snow-ing now.

The snow was not deep, so that a sled would run well on it; but Tom wished he could go and make snow-balls of it.

Rose did not ask to go out, for fear Tom would feel more bad-ly. And Ned did not think of it, as long as the oth-ers did not go.

As they sat there, by the window, they saw some dear little birds on the ground, close by the house.

They seemed to hop a-bout in the snow as if they did not mind it a bit.

“O, mam-ma,” said Tom, “*do* come and look at these dear little birds !”

“Yes ; they are snow-birds ; see them hop a-round to find something to eat !”

“O, may we give them something ?” said Rose.

“Yes, you may go and ask Ruth for some crumbs to give them; put on your hat and sack, and Ned’s, too.”

Rose was just a-bout to run, when she saw that Tom looked as if he would cry, and she drew back.

“Go on, my love,” said her mamma; “Tom and I will look out and see you feed the birds; I am sure he does not want you to stay in be-cause he can-not go; *do* you, Tom?”

“No, mam-ma,” said Tom, “of *course* not ; I will look out and see you, Rose.”

So Rose and Ned put on their things, and went to Ruth for some crumbs.

Then they went out to throw them to the birds.

The birds were quite tame, for they *did* want the nice crumbs too much to fly off and leave them.

In the pic-ture you may see Rose and Ned, as they fed the birds.



Mike's lit-tle dog, Fox, had come up to the house with him. He tried to go af-ter the chil-dren, but he did not like the snow much.

He was like Ned—he did not know what to make of it, for he was but a pup.

It made Tom laugh to see him lift his paw out of the snow.

The birds did not like the look of Fox much, for they flew up on a tree.

Rose did not see that Fox had come out, but she said, “Never mind, Ned; we will throw down the crumbs, and then stand back to see them eat.”

So they did; and Fox ran back

to find Mike. Then the birds came and ate the crumbs.

After they flew off, Rose made some balls of the snow, and threw them up at the window where Tom sat.

They were too soft to break the glass.

It was fun to Ned to step round, and see the print his feet made in the snow.

“O, look !” said he ; “ see all my *foots* in the snow ! ”

Rose did not stay out as long as

she would have liked, for she knew Tom must be lone-some.

Ned want-ed to stay out and make more foot-prints; but he soon came in, too.

XII.

AN-OTH-ER SUN-DAY AT HOME.

THE chil-dren had not had to stay at home from church since they got well of their cough, for there had been bright, clear Sun-days all through the fall.

But at last, when they woke up one Sun-day, they heard the rain and sleet beat on the win-dow, and they knew they could not get to town that day.

At first they felt ver-y sor-ry, and quite put out, when they saw what a storm there was; but Jane said, —

“Don’t you know what your ma told you a-bout Who makes the storms, and how it must be all for the best?”

“Yes,” said Rose. “And then, Tom, if we can-not go to church, we can have an-oth-er nice Sun-day at home.”

“Yes,” said Tom; “I’m glad it is Sun-day, a-ny way.”

So, when break-fast and prayers were o-ver, the lit-tle folks began to think what they could do. They went to mam-ma, to ask her.

“I will give you a verse to learn now, Rose,” said she, “and Tom may learn one, too; and Ned may look at his pic-ture books while you learn them.

“I want you to keep still by your-selves one hour; if you get your ver-ses in less time, you can read in some of your books.

“Then, at half past ten, I will

read to you; you can come to me at that time, in the sit-ting-room."

Rose and Tom took care to get their ver-ses by heart, the first thing. Rose said hers to Tom, and then Tom said his to Rose, to make sure they knew it. Then they each got a book to look at till it was time to go to their mam-ma.

When it was half past ten, she came to call them, and they were glad the hour was up.

When they had said the ver-ses,

mam-ma read to them, from the Bi-ble, a-bout how Je-sus fed a great ma-ny men, and wo-men, and chil-dren, when He had but five loaves, and two small fish-es, to do it with.

And then (for that came next) how He went to His friends who were out on the sea in a ship, walk-ing on the sea.

“Could we walk on the sea, mam-ma?” said Tom; “could a-ny one, I mean?”

“No, my dear; no man could

do it but Je-sus, un-less he gave the pow-er to do it. That was why the men in the ship cried out for fear, when they saw the Lord walk-ing on the wa-ter.

“But now I will read on, a-bout what Pe-ter said.”

So mam-ma read how Je-sus said to the men, “It is I; be not a-fraid.” And when Pe-ter heard Je-sus speak, he said, “Lord, if it be Thou, bid me come to Thee on the wa-ter.”

And Je-sus said, “Come.” Then

Pe-ter got down out of the ship to walk on the sea, to go to Je-sus.

But when he saw how the wind blew, and made the waves high, he was a-fraid; he for-got then that the Lord had told him to come, and that He would take care of him.

And when he for-got to trust in his Lord, he *did* be-gin to sink, and he cried, "Lord, save me!"

Then, at once, Je-sus put out his hand, and caught him, and held him up.

And He said to Pe-ter, "O thou of lit-tle faith, why didst thou doubt?"

And the men in the ship saw all this, and they felt sure that Je-sus was the Son of God.

When they had talked of this some time, mam-ma shut the book, and said, "Now I want some lit-tle birds to sing for me."

"Will you please sing too, mam-ma?" said Rose; "for we can-not sing much with-out you."

So they all sang some nice

hymns. Then they had dinner; and after dinner, mamma had to go and lie down, to take a rest, for she did not feel well.

But the children had a nice time, sitting with their papa. He put down his book, to talk to them; and then, by and by, he took down a fine, large book from the book-case, which they could not take by themselves, and laid it on the table, so they might all see the pictures in it.

So, before they knew it, it

was dark, and time to light the lamps.

This the chil-dren thought was the best part of the day. They liked to have their books and slates, or a pa-per to draw or write up-on, and sit a-round a bright lamp.

The worst of it was, they did not like to leave the bright, warm room when bed-time came.

But they knew they must not say a word when mam-ma said it was time to go to bed, for she knew best.

If lit-tle folks sit up too late at night, they will not be apt to have bright eyes, or rosy cheeks.

Rose and Tom had leave to sit up half an hour la-ter on Sun-days, for it was such a hap-py day to them, they did not like it to come to an end.

XIII.

THE WHEEL-BAR-ROW.

ONE af-ter-noon, Rose, and Tom, and Ned were down with Ruth, in the kitch-en.

The kitch-en was warm, and the chil-dren liked to be there, and talk to Ruth while she was at work.

Mike was at work in the yard. He had a wheel-bar-row, and was wheel-ing in some bits of board

that he had cut up for light-wood, to the wood-shed.

As Tom and Ned were look-ing out at him, off came the wheel from the bar-row, and down came the load.

This made the young ones laugh and clap their hands. Mike saw them, and he made up his fist at them, in fun.

“It is well he has not got his wife in that wheel-bar-row,” said Ruth, “like the lit-tle man in the song.”

“What is the song? Tell us, Ruth.”

So Ruth told them the old song of the lit-tle man that “lived by him-self; and all the bread and cheese he had, he put it on his shelf.”

And how the rats and mice ate his bread and cheese, till at last he went up to town to buy him a wife.

“*Buy* a wife!” said Rose. “Men can’t buy a wife. They shall not buy *me*, when I grow up.”

“No, that they shall not,” said Ruth, with a laugh; “but that is what the song says.”

And then she went on to tell how he tried to bring his wife home in a wheel-bar-row, and “the wheel-bar-row broke, and his wife had a fall.”

“O,” cried Rose, “there is a picture of that in a book up stairs, I know. I mean to run and ask mam-ma to let me get it and bring it down.”

Rose went up and got leave to hunt for the book.



Soon she came down with the picture, and it made them all laugh.

“See the lit-tle wife hug that band-box,” said Rose. “I guess she has got her best hat in it.”

“And see all her trunks! No won-der the poor wheel-bar-row broke!” said Tom.

“There!” said Ruth; “now you must take that nice book out of my way, and your lit-tle selves, too. I want to fry my cakes, and the fat may burn you.”

“O, are you go-ing to make fried cakes?” said Tom; “do let us see you. I like fried cakes.”

“Yes, but you would not like a burn on your face or hands. Now you must all stay that side of the room, out of my way, and then see what I will make for you, by and by.”

“O, I know, I know,” cried Rose; “you made me one once — didn’t you, Ruth?”

“Hush! you must not tell,” said Ruth; and she went on with her work.

Soon the fat began to boil hard, and Ruth threw in her cakes, and

then out they came, nice and brown.

Rose and the boys could but just wait on their side of the room; but Ruth did not mean to make them wait long.

Soon she came and put some odd things in-to the hot fat, with great care; and then, when they were done, she took them out on a plate, and brought them to the chil-dren.

How they did laugh There was a dough boy for Tom, and one

for Ned, and a cake in the shape of a girl for Rose. But the feet of the girl had puffed out, as big as her head, and one boy had a great wen on one side of his head, and the oth-er had lost one arm in the hot fat, and Ruth had laid it by his side.

But they were just as good to eat as if they were of the best shape that ev-er was seen.

Ruth said she made them a good shape, but they did not like the hot fat, and got all in a twist try-ing to get out.

This made Ned put on a long face; he thought Ruth meant that the dough boys and girl *did* feel the heat. But he saw the rest all laugh; so he laughed, too.

Then Ruth put some wee bits of cakes in to boil, and they came out just like brown nuts.

And mam-ma, who came down to see what they were all a-bout, said they might have tea at a lit-tle ta-ble, and Rose might set it out with her tea-set, and have the lit-tle nut-cakes, and some bread

and but-ter, cut small and thin, and a lit-tle bit of a glass dish of jam.

So they set the ta-ble in great glee, and brought all the dolls to tea.

Rose had the head of the ta-ble, to pour out the milk in-to the lit-tle cups. They called it tea, but they did not drink real tea; it was not good for them; and, more than that, they did not like the taste of it as well as of good, sweet milk.

XIV.

A FUN-NY DAY.

ONE day when Rose and Tom were to start for school, Jane came and gave Rose a lit-tle note to take to Mrs. Bond.

“*Mrs.* Bond ! Did not mam-ma say Miss El-la, Jane ? ”

“ No, it is for Mrs. Bond ; don’t for-get to give it to her.”

So Rose gave the note to Mrs. Bond, with great care. Soon af-ter,

as Rose sat in school, she saw Mrs. Bond go out of the gate, with her hood and cloak on, but Rose did not think where she might be go-ing.

When the chil-dren had had their play at noon, and had eat-en their lunch, and were in school a-gain, who should come to the door but lit-tle Ned, with Mrs. Bond!

Tom and Rose were so glad to see him! and Ned's face was all smiles, when he saw them in their seats.

“Here is a lit-tle boy who wants to come to school to-day, Miss El-la,” said Mrs. Bond; “can you find a place for him?”

“O, yes, to be sure I can,” said Miss El-la; and she gave Ned a kiss, and said she was glad he had come. Then she let him sit by Tom, and Fred Ray.

Tom gave him his slate to mark on, and Ned sat as still as a-ny of them; he seemed to think school was a fine place for boys and girls. I think so, too: such a school as that.

When school was out, Rose went to get her hood and sack from the nail; but Miss El-la said, "Wait a lit-tle while, Rose, my dear; I think moth-er wants to see you."

Just then, Mrs. Bond came in and said, "Rose and Tom, would you like to stay and take tea with us? Ned has come to stay, and your mam-ma says you may stay, too."

"O, *do*," cried A-my and Lu-cy; "it will be so nice; we will have lots of fun!"

“I should like to ver-y much,” said Rose. And Tom said the same.

“Did you go to our house, and get Ned, and ask mam-ma?” said Rose.

Mrs. Bond smiled, and said, “Yes;” and Rose said, “I think you are kind.”

Mrs. Bond said, “I am glad you like to stay, my dar-ling. And now, if Miss El-la will let us, suppose we turn the school-room in-to a play-room, for the rest of the day; it is nice and warm here.”

“I think it will be a good plan,” said Miss El-la. “Come, girls, we will put the ink all out of the way, and move the desks back.”

So they all went to work, and soon the room looked like a-ny thing but a school-room; for they put the books, and slates, and ink out of the way, and then the girls got their dolls, and dolls’ bed, and chest of draw-ers, and all the toys they had, down in-to the room.

A-my and Rose had a good play with dolls, and did not care

for much else; for they *did* love to dress dolls, both of them, as you will think when you look at this picture.



As for Lu-cy, she did not think so much of dolls, but she loved *live* dolls — lit-tle chil-dren — to play with; so she had *her* fun in a talk and a romp with Tom and lit-tle Ned; she thought Ned was just the dear-est lit-tle boy she ev-er saw.

When they had done tea, Rose said, “I hope mam-ma will think to send Mike for us, for it is quite dark out-doors.”

“Mike will come for you, if they think best to have you go home

to-night," said Mrs. Bond; "but I think your mam-ma will let you stay with us all night."

Rose looked at Mrs. Bond without a word, for she did not know what to think.

Tom said, "Why, how can we, Mrs. Bond? How can we go to sleep here? Have you got some cot beds and a crib?"

"Yes, I have a good big crib, that I keep for lit-tle folks who may come to see me; Ned shall have that, if you stay, and we will

find a nice place for you and for Rose.”

“ Well,” said Rose, at last, “ I do think this is a fun-ny day.”

“ Why ? ” asked Miss El-la, with a smile.

“ Why, Jane gave me that note when we came to school ; and then Mrs. Bond went to our house ; and then Ned came to school ; and now mam-ma is go-ing to let us stay out all night, and we nev-er did be-fore, at a-ny place, with-out her.”

“Well,” said A-my, and she gave a jump up and down, “I think it is re-al fun, a-ny way! We will have such fun when we go to bed! We can guess names in the dark, you know, and all such things!”

Lit-tle Ned did not quite know how he liked this plan; he be-gan to want to see his pa-pa and mam-ma, and his face looked quite grave.

But they all set to work to make him laugh, and soon he was in high glee a-gain, and he did not

cry at all, when he was put to bed in a strange room. Rose went with him to help un-dress him, and make him feel more at home; and he was soon fast a-sleep in the big old crib.

XV.

A HAP-PY DAY.

THE next day, the chil-dren all set to work, af-ter break-fast, to take the dolls and toys up stairs, and help Miss El-la get the school-room in or-der once more.

When the oth-er chil-dren came to school, they seemed to think it odd to see Rose, and Tom, and lit-tle Ned Dale all in the room with Lu-cy and A-my, as if they lived there.

“Why, how did you get here so soon?” said Nell Ray; “we came as soon as we had done our breakfast.”

“Ah, but we have been here all night!” said Tom.

At this, Nell made her mouth in the shape of a big round O, and her eyes, too. She could not see in-to it, at all.

The school-time was nice, and Miss El-la was kind, as she was at all times. But Rose and Tom could not help wish-ing that it was

time for school to be out, for they were not used to stay-ing from home so long.

As for Ned, he was ver-y still and grave the last hour of school, and Miss El-la took him on her lap, and asked him "if he were *home-sick*."

Just at noon, and just as Miss El-la said school was out, who should drive up to the door but Mike him-self!

He brought a note for Mrs. Bond, too; and he came in to ask

Miss El-la if she would let Rose and Tom out for that day, for their mam-ma want-ed them at home.

Miss El-la said, "Yes;" and you may be sure it did not take the young ones long to put on their things.

Ned, in his haste to help himself, put on his sack coat up-side down, which made all the chil-dren laugh.

But at last they were on the way home. As they drove a-long, Mike said, "Ah, what would you

give to know what your mam-ma has got to show you?"

"What? What? O, do tell us, Mike!" cried they all. But Mike shook his head, and laughed, and said, "Hold on till you get home; we are most there."

Then they pulled his coat, and Tom got hold of his arm, and Rose of his ear, in fun, to make him tell. But just then they drove into the yard, and then they left Mike in peace, and ran in to see for them-selves.

“Jane, where is mam-ma, and what has she got to show us?” they all cried, at once.

“Hush!” said Jane; “be still now, and you shall go and see. But your mam-ma is sick, and you must not make a noise, or you will make her head ache.”

So they took off their out-door things, and then went up on tip-toe to their mam-ma’s room.

Some one, whom they did not know, came to o-pen the door. She looked like a nice, kind, old

la-dy, and she had a cap and *specs* on.

When she saw three lit-tle chil-dren at the door, as still as mice, she smiled at them, and said, "Come in, my dears! your mam-ma wants to see you."

So Rose and Tom went up to the bed to kiss their mam-ma, and the old la-dy took Ned in her arms to see her, too.

Ned was just go-ing to jump on the bed to give his mam-ma a good hug; but the old la-dy held

him fast, and said, "Take care! wait a bit, my dear!"

Then Rose said, "O, mam-ma, what have you got to show us?"

And mam-ma turned down the bed-clothes a lit-tle, and told them to look.

There, on her arm, fast a-sleep, lay a dear lit-tle mite of a ba-by!

Rose, and Tom, and Ned looked down at the ba-by, and then up at their mam-ma, and then at the dear lit-tle round head, with its soft, brown hair, once more. They

did not know what to make of it, at all.

“Well,” said the old la-dy, “how do you like this dear lit-tle sis-ter?”

“O, mam-ma, is it ours? is it ours to keep?” cried Rose.

And Tom said, “Is it a re-al, live ba-by, mam-ma?”

“Yes, dear ones, it is a re-al, live ba-by, and it is ours to keep, and to love dear-ly.”

Just then their pa-pa came in. He had to go to town for an hour

or two, but he had come home on the noon train.

“O, pa-pa,” cried Tom, as he sprang to meet him, “do just come and see what we have got!”

“I think I know what we have got,” said pa-pa, with a laugh. “And Aunt Kate sent our ba-by a good kiss.” And pa-pa bent down to give it. I think he gave the mam-ma one, too.

“Did it come here be-fore you went to town?” asked Rose.

“O, pa-pa, where did it come

from? Who gave us our new ba-by?"

"God gave it to us, my dear boy; God made this dear ba-by to be your lit-tle sis-ter."

"O, O," cried Tom; "did He send her down from the sky? and did an an-gel bring her to us?"

"O, no, my dear; God made her here on the earth."

Tom, and Rose, and Ned looked at each oth-er, and then gave a look round the room.

“Will you not thank God for giv-ing you this dear lit-tle sis-ter to love?” said pa-pa.

The lit-tle ones all said, “Yes,” as if they meant it, and then they bent o-ver to look at the dear ba-by a-gain.

Lit-tle Ned looked up in his mam-ma’s face, when he saw how the ba-by lay on her arm, and said, “You is *my* mam-ma, *too* — isn’t you, mam-ma?”

“O, yes, in-deed, my pet,” said his mam-ma; “I am your own

mam-ma, just the same ; and ba-by is your own lit-tle sis-ter."

The look of love that his mam-ma gave him made lit-tle Ned feel all right and hap-py. He gave the ba-by's cheek a soft pat with his lit-tle hand.

"O, you will wake her up," cried Rose.

"I wish she would wake," said Tom ; "I do so want to see her eyes, and hands, and feet !"

"O ! has the ba-by got some feet ?" said Ned ; "can she walk ?"

“She has two dear lit-tle feet, but she can-not walk yet, my pet,” said mam-ma.

“Come,” said their pa-pa, “I think we will all go down stairs now, and see if Ruth has some din-ner for us; I fear we shall make mam-ma’s head ache, if we stay here now.”

“May we take the ba-by down, too?” said Ned; “I will draw her in my lit-tle cart, so she need not walk a bit!”

“O, no!” said pa-pa; “let ba-by

sleep now in her warm nest; by and by, may be, Aunt-y Bates will let you come and see her a-gain."

"Yes," said the kind old la-dy, "by and by, when she is a-wake, you shall come and see her."

The chil-dren did not like to leave their mam-ma and the dear new ba-by; but they knew they must do as their pa-pa said; so they said, "Good by," and went soft-ly out.

"What dear, good chil-dren they are!" said the old la-dy to

their mam-ma, when they were gone.

Their mam-ma thought so, too, and she smiled and felt ver-y hap-py.

O, if all you dear lit-tle pets did but know how glad you make your kind friends when you are good, and how sad they feel when you are bad, and do not mind what they say, how you *would* try, and pray God to help you to be good, all the time!

XVI.

THE DEAR BA-BY.

ROSE, and Tom, and Ned did not like to sit down to dinner without their dear mam-ma; it was so strange to them.

But their pa-pa did his best to make them hap-py; he told Rose to sit in her mam-ma's place, and play she was the mam-ma; and then he said fun-ny things, to make them laugh.

“By and by, mam-ma will come down stairs — won’t she, pa-pa?” said Ned.

“Yes, be-fore ma-ny days I hope she will be well. And by and by that ba-by sis-ter will want to come to the ta-ble; will you give her your high chair, when she does?”

“O, yes, ’course I will! Why, I shall be a man then; *won’t* I, pa-pa?”

“Not quite, I think; near to it, I dare say.”

This made Jane smile, as she was cut-ting up Ned's din-ner for him.

"Why," said Ned, "you must not laugh, Jane; 'course I shall be a man, one day."

"Shall I tell you, Ned," said papa, "what you did, the first time you sat up in your high chair with us, at the ta-ble?"

"What *did* I do?" said Ned.

"You took up a spoon, and beat Rose on the head with it, so that she was glad to move off from you."

Af-ter din-ner, Jane told the chil-dren they must play by themselves, and be as still as they could, for she had some work to see to.

“Do not go to your mam-ma’s room till you are called,” said she.

Just then, Mrs. Bates came to get her din-ner; she could not leave be-fore.

She heard what Jane said. Rose, and Tom, and Ned all stood near, while she ate her din-ner.

They did not know who she

was, but they saw she had something to do with the dear ba-by.

At last, Rose said, "Will you call us, when we may come and see our ba-by, and mam-ma?"

"Yes, my dear, I will be sure to ; for I know such good lit-tle chil-dren will go down, when I say it is time."

"O, yes, ma'am," said Rose ; but in her heart there was a great wish that she could see her ba-by sis-ter all day.

The nurse seemed to know what

was in her mind, for she said, "In a few days, I hope, you can see the sweet ba-by all you wish; and I dare say you can hold her in your lap. Let me see! How old are you?"

"I shall be sev-en next month, mam-ma says."

"O! then you will make a nice lit-tle nurse; and how that ba-by will love you all, if you are kind to her!"

These words made the tears come in Rose's eyes, just for joy.

She was so glad that she had a re-al lit-tle ba-by sis-ter to play with, and to love.

When the nurse was gone back, the chil-dren did not do much but talk of the ba-by, and tell what they would do for her when she grew big-ger.

It was not long be-fore Mrs. Bates came to the head of the stairs, and called them.

“Ba-by is a-wake now,” she said, “and you may come and see her.”

So they all ran up. Mrs. Bates took the ba-by on her lap, so they could have a good look at her.

“O, what dear lit-tle pink hands!” cried Rose.

“See her make up her fist!” said Tom; “she wants to fight us.”

“Why don’t she o-pen her eyes wide, and look at us?”

“O, she will in a day or two, when her dear lit-tle eyes are more used to the light.”

“I want to see her feet,” said Ned; “please let me see ba-by’s feet.”

“Yes, here they are ; see ! just as ma-ny toes on each wee foot as you have on yours !”

“See her kick them out ! O, what a dear lit-tle fun-ny ba-by she is ! May I kiss her ?”

“Yes, to be sure you may.”

So each one gave her a kiss, a soft kiss, for fear they might hurt her.

“O, mam-ma,” said Rose, “has the ba-by got a name ?”

“I think we will call her Bell,” said mam-ma ; “will you like that name ?”

“Yes, it is nice; but, mam-ma, why don’t you name her Kate, for dear Aunt Kate?”

“Be-cause, dear, Aunt Kate will like best to have me give her this name. Her whole name will be Is-a-bel, and it was the name of a dear friend who is dead, whom Aunt Kate loved as well as I did.”

“It is a *re-al* nice name,” said Rose; “O, you dear ba-by Bell, I do love you so much!”

Now the ba-by be-gan to cry, and she made such an odd face

that the chil-dren could not but laugh.

Then their mam-ma looked tired, nurse thought; so she said, "Now you dear lit-tle ones must run down and play. Let me see! you all sleep right in this next large room?"

"Yes," said Tom.

"Well, then, when you go to bed, you can come in and kiss mam-ma and ba-by 'good-night.' Then in the morning you shall come in again."

So Rose said, "Come, Ned, let us go and play that Lu-lu was ba-by Bell, and you give her a ride in your cart."

"Well," said Ned; and so they all went down stairs.

XVII.

THE SLEIGH-RIDE.

WHEN the young folks went down stairs, Tom gave a look out of the win-dow, and cried out, "O, the snow! the snow! just look, Rose! see how it comes down! the ground is all white, so soon!"

In fact, the snow had been falling for some time; but the children had had no thought for a-ny thing but the dear new ba-by.

“I do hope it will snow all night, just as fast as it does now,” said Tom; “and then *won't* we have some fun?”

“Then will your sled go, Tom?” said Ned.

“Yes, to be sure it will; and the sleigh, you know, Ned; won't it be nice to have a sleigh-ride? Mike said he would try to take us the first day that the sleigh would run.”

“We have bells on the horse, Ned, when we have a sleigh-ride;

and then, when the horse trots, the bells go 'jing-a-ling! jing-a-ling!' and it is such fun to hear them as we go!"

"O, I do wish we could have a sleigh-ride now!" said lit-tle Ned. "Make haste, snow, and come down fast!"

The snow did come as fast as it could, and Rose, and Tom, and Ned stood some time at the window to watch it, and to see how all things out of doors got a nice, white dress on.

But soon it grew dark, — too dark to see out from the win-dow.

Their pa-pa had been out, and when he came in to tea he had to stand in the hall, and stamp, and shake him-self, and at last send Rose for a broom to brush the snow off his coat.

Tom said, “O, pa-pa, don’t you think there will be snow on the ground now, so we can have a sleigh-ride?”

“It looks like it, my boy; I think you will find a-bout as much

snow as you care for, when you wake up in the morn-ing. But don't get a sore throat a-gain, in your haste to play in the snow."

The chil-dren were glad to go to bed that night, so that morn-ing would come soon; but they did not for-get to go in and kiss ba-by Bell and mam-ma, as nurse Bates said they might.

"What a dear lit-tle thing she is, mam-ma!" said Rose; "O, I am so, so glad that I have got a sis-ter now!"

Rose did not for-get what her pa-pa said a-bout the ba-by, for she knelt down by her-self to thank God for this good gift.



And when they all said their prayers, be-fore they got in-to bed, they said, "God bless our dear ba-by sis-ter, too."

In the morn-ing, the snow was so deep that Mike had to go to work with a big snow-spade, made of wood, and dig a path to the front gate, and one to the barn.

Rose, and Tom, and Ned, all had their warm sacks on, and went out to see him, and Tom had a small spade to help.

Then Mike got out the sleigh, and put the bells on old Dick, and he got a warm fur robe to put in the sleigh.

He was to take Mr. Dale to the

cars first, and then he was to come back and take Rose and Tom to school.

Of course they all went in to see the ba-by be-fore they went to school.

The sleigh-ride to school was so nice, that the chil-dren did not like to stop ; but Mike told them that if the sun came out he was to come for them, af-ter school, with Ned, to take a ride ; and they were to ask A-my and Lu-cy to go, too.

O, how much there was to be

said when they got in-to the school-room !

A-my, and Lu-cy, and Nell, and Fred, and all the rest, had to hear all a-bout the ba-by sis-ter ; and it was great news, you may be sure !

Then Rose told the girls they were to have a sleigh-ride, af-ter school, if the sun came out ; and they all made a rush to the win-dow, to see if it did not shine through the clouds.

There was a bright spot in one place, and Lu-cy said she knew it

would be clear by the time school was out.

Ruth had put up a nice lunch for Rose and Tom; they took their lunch to school most of the days, now it was so cold.

The sun did come out, just in time, and Mike came, with Ned in the sleigh; and when the girls and Tom got in, he tucked the robes in close a-bout them, to keep them, as he said, —

“As warm and snug
As a bug in a rug.”

Old Dick went as fast as if he liked to trot in the snow. The air was keen and cold, but they were so snug they did not mind it at all, and they had a grand time with their first sleigh-ride.

XVIII.

TWO VIS-ITS.

A DAY or two af-ter this, Aunt Kate and I-da came out to spend the day, and see the ba-by.

Rose and Tom did not go to school that day; they had leave to stay at home and see I-da.

I-da was just wild with joy when she saw the ba-by.

She said, "O, mam-ma, put it in a bas-ket, and let us take it home,

to be our ba-by, just as we did the kit-ty !”

Ned ran up at this, and put his arms round the ba-by, and his face was quite red as he said, “*No*, I-da; she is *our* ba-by, and you can’t have her to take home.”

Rose and Tom did but laugh, for they knew their mam-ma would not let a-ny one take the ba-by.

“I will tell you, I-da dear,” said ba-by’s mam-ma, “what we will do. It is most Christ-mas time,

and then you and your pa-pa and mam-ma are to come out here a-gain, and you can see the ba-by as much as you want to."

"O, is it most Christ-mas, mam-ma?" said Rose.

"Yes, in-deed, it is, dear; Christ-mas will be here in four weeks more."

"O, joy, joy!" cried Rose and Tom. I-da and Ned did not know so well what Christ-mas meant, but they had to say, "Joy, joy!" too, and jump a-bout, and clap

their hands, just as the others did.

Nurse Bates held up her hand and said, "Hush," in her soft way.

"Come," said Aunt Kate, "let us all go down, and let mam-ma rest a while."

So Aunt Kate went down with them, and they all got round her, and told her all the news.

Then it was time for dinner, and after dinner Aunt Kate went up to see their mam-ma again, and left I-da with the children.

Mike was to drive in-to town, to take Aunt Kate and I-da, and bring Mr. Dale home.

Aunt Kate had a talk with her sis-ter, to coax her to say that the chil-dren might go in-to town with her, and stay till Sun-day, which was the next day but one; then their pa-pa could come in to church, and bring them home in the sleigh, af-ter church.

“Do let me take them,” said Aunt Kate; “I can take care of them as well as not, and they do

not know what to do with themselves, now you are sick."

At last mam-ma said they might go, and then Jane was called in haste, to look up the clothes they would want, and pack them in a bag.

"If you can spare me, ma'am," said Jane, "I might go in on the train, and help take care of the chil-dren, if Mrs. Wells has a place for me to stay."

"I think that will be a good plan, Jane; yes, I think we can

spare you, and Mrs. Wells will have her hands full with them all."

"There will be room in the sleigh for Jane — will there not?" said Aunt Kate; "we can take Ned and I-da in our laps."

All this time, the lit-tle ones did not know a word of the plan; but now Jane went to call them, for it was time to dress them to go.

You may guess how pleased they all were when they heard it: to stay two whole days at Aunt Kate's! O, what good news it was!

They were glad Jane was to go, for it would seem more like home, if she were there to take care of them at night. To tell the truth, they had all felt a lit-tle strange, the night they were to sleep at Mrs. Bond's — al-most home-sick, just at bed-time.

You would have thought Mike had a whole nest of chip-ping birds in the sleigh, as he drove in-to town, the young ones were so gay, and so full of fun.

I can-not tell you all they did

while they were at Aunt Kate's; how fun-ny Un-cle Will was! and what a nice walk they had with Jane, to see all the shops! and what nice plays with I-da!

Pa-pa came round to see them, and he took din-ner at Aunt Kate's. He said he did not know what he must do to her for running off with all his pets.

"O, pa-pa! not all!" said Rose; "you have got one at home."

"Why, to be sure!" cried pa-pa; "I *have* got four now! Well,

as I am so rich, may be I can give some of you to Un-cle Will and Aunt Kate."

"O, no!" cried all three, at once.

"Why not? You seem to love to come here."

"O, yes!" said Tom; "they are nice, but you are *best*!"

This made them all laugh.

The chil-dren all sent a kiss to their mam-ma and the ba-by, when their pa-pa went home.

The next day was a fine day, and they all went to church.

And af-ter church, they were tucked in-to the sleigh a-gain, to drive home with their pa-pa.

“Good by!” cried lit-tle I-da;
“when Kist-mas comes, we sall come and see *you!*”

XIX.

THE SNOW FORT.

“Tom,” said Mike, one day, while the snow lay on the ground, “why don’t you make a snow fort?”

Tom had not seen such a thing, and he did not know what Mike could mean.

So Mike told him how to make it, and laid one row of blocks of snow with his spade, for Tom to build on.

“Now,” said he, “if you and Rose can build up the fort, I will try to make a snow man for you, in-side of it; Ned can help too, I dare say.”

Tom ran to call Rose, and tell her of the new play; and she and Ned put on their snow boots, and sacks, and mit-tens, to go out and help.

They had not much time to work be-fore dark. “O, dear!” said Tom, “I wish the days were not so short.”

“If the days were long,” said Jane, who had come to call them in, “you would have no snow to work with; when the days are long, it is warm, and the grass is green.”

“Why, that’s so!” said Tom. “Well, then I like the short days.”

When pa-pa came home, he had to be told all a-bout the fort, and he was so kind as to go out and look at it, by the light of the moon.

“That is ver-y well be-gun,”

said he ; “ did you lay a corner-stone ? ”

Rose and Tom had to ask what that meant.

So pa-pa told them that when a church or a large hall was built, the cor-ner stone was laid with great pains, and some-times ma-ny would come to see.

In a hole in the stone was put a box, with books and pa-pers in it, and this was closed, and the oth-er stones laid on it.

“ What do they put the books

and things in the box for, if they are to build right on top of it, so they can-not get at it?" asked Rose.

"It is done so that, if the church should burn down, or if, af-ter long years, they should pull it down, these books and pa-pers would be found there."

"I wish we had a box to put in the cor-ner of our fort," said Tom.

"Well, I will get you one when we have had our tea," said his pa-pa.

So he gave them a small, strong wood-en box, which was just the thing.

“When your fort *melts* down, you will find your box,” said he.

In the morn-ing, the chil-dren were in great haste to be up and dressed, that they might work at the fort be-fore they went to school.

Pa-pa gave them a pa-per, full of large pic-tures, when he gave them the box.

They put this in, but they wanted some-thing more.

“We must not put our nice books in,” said Rose, in her wise way; “for when the fort melts, they may get wet.”

“O, here is a book that will just do,” cried Tom; “it is an old thing, and pa-pa can-not want it, or it would not be round this room.”

It was a blank book; I mean that it was not print-ed, but was made to write in.

Rose thought this would do; and so they shut the box, and dug

a hole for it in the cor-ner block of the fort. They put on a few more blocks of snow, and that was all they had time to do be-fore school.

But when they were gone, Mike, as he was round in the yard, put on a row of big blocks, "to help them a bit," as he said.

When the young ones came home, they were in great glee to see how high the fort had grown; they knew Mike had been at work at it, of course.

They had to bring out a bench to stand on to work at the fort, for they were but small tots, you know.

Be-fore dark Mike came by, to go and milk the cow, and he said, "There, I should say that is as high as you need to make it.

"Now we will have the snow man in there, and you shall help me fix him up, with eyes, and nose, and mouth, and a pipe in his mouth."

"O, I wish we could do it to-night," said Tom.

“O, don’t you be in a twitch,” said Mike; “the next day will soon be here.”

When pa-pa came home, he went to the din-ing room, as if to look for some-thing. As he did not seem to find it, he went in-to the oth-er rooms.

As they sat down to tea, he said, “Jane, have you seen a store-book round here? I am sure I left it here when I went to town this morn-ing. I put it down to change my coat, and went off with-out it.”

“No, sir,” said Jane; “I came in to dust the room as soon as you were gone, and I did not see it.”

Rose and Tom looked up at this.

“What kind of a book was it, pa-pa?”

“A blank book, my dear, with covers like this.”

Rose and Tom grew red, and Tom said, “O, pa-pa, we thought it was an old book you did not want, and we put it in the box in our corner stone.”

Mr. Dale tried to look grave,

but he could not keep back a smile ; nor could Jane.

Mr. Dale got up to look out at the fort, but he could not see it well.

“Have you put much snow on it ? ” he asked.

“Yes, sir ; Mike put on a big lot.”

“O, dear ! Well, I think my store-book is done for. I must go to ‘Day and Gibbs,’ and tell them that my book is in a heap of snow, and they must make me a new one.”

Pa-pa put on a long face, as he said this, and Rose and Tom did not know which was best, to laugh or cry.

“Well, my dears,” said pa-pa, at last, “there is no such great harm done, in this case ; but do not take a book a-gain in such a way, till you ask if you may have it. You must learn not to touch things that are not your own.”

XX.

SPILL-ING THE INK.

ROSE and Tom had a talk, when they went up to bed, a-bout the store-book.

Tom said, "How kind pa-pa was, when he knew we took his book! I mean to try not to do a-ny thing more that will vex him."

Tom did mean to try, but it was not long be-fore he did a sad thing a-gain.

This was the way of it. There came a hard rain one day, and it made the snow melt, and give way, fast.

The snow man lost his pipe; then he cried his eyes out; then he grew so warm and soft, that he went drip, drip, drip, till there was no more of him.

And his fort sank down, too.

The roads were so wet, that the chil-dren could not go to school.

And, worst of all, their mam-ma was not so well that day; and pa-

pa looked grave as he went off to town; and Jane had to say, "Hush, Tom! come here, Ned!" all day, for fear they would make mam-ma worse.

Then Rose felt bad, be-cause she could not go in and see ba-by Bell, but must stay out and try to keep the lit-tle boys hap-py at play.

In fact, Rose was cross, and was not kind to Tom and Ned.

She took one of her books, and sat down by her-self to read; and Ned went down to see Ruth.

Tom went a-bout to see what he might do.

There was a small room, back of the par-lor, where Mr. Dale had his books, and his ta-ble to write on, and maps, and such things.

He did not like to have the little ones go in-to this room when he was not there, for some-times there were pa-pers, and such things, left on the ta-ble, which were of great use to him.

Tom had been told this; but this day he stood at the door of

the room to look in. No one was by to say, "Don't go there, Tom."

There was a still voice in his heart that said so, but Tom did not mind it.

He had his whip in his hand, and he said to him-self, "What a nice horse the arm of pa's chair will be! I mean to have a ride; I will not touch pa's things."

As if he need look up a nice horse, when he had his own rocking horse, that most lit-tle boys would be glad to ride!

But if he had had no horse at all, he ought not to have gone in-to his pa-pa's room.

“O, here is pa-pa's cane!” said Tom; “my whip is not as big as I need for such a stout horse; I will take this.”

So Tom got up on the arm of the chair, and put a string round it, for a bri-dle, and cried, “Get up.”

But as he struck out the cane to whip the horse, he hit the large ink-stand that was on the ta-ble,



and o-ver it went, and down ran
the ink, in a black stream, on the
ta-ble, on the pa-pers that lay on
it, and on the car-pet.

What did Tom do now? You may think how bad he felt!

It was his way to talk to himself when no one was by, just as Ned did.

So he said, "O, dear! now what will pa-pa say? May be, if I don't tell that I came in here, he will think it was Puss that did it."

Tom sat still, and looked at the ink, and thought a lit-tle more.

"No," said he, at last; "if I should make pa-pa think Puss did it, I should be a re-al bad boy;

and I won't do *two* bad things; I mean to tell pa-pa, if he does whip me."

Now pa-pa had come home on the noon train, to see how mamma was, and he had come to the door just as the ink went o-ver.

When he heard Tom talk, he drew back, that he might not see him.

He was glad in-deed to hear his boy make up his mind to tell the truth.

He went out, and soon Tom

came to find him, when he knew that he had come home.

“Pa-pa,” said Tom, “I went in-to your room to ride horse, and I hit your ink-stand, and spilled the ink.”

“But you know, my son, I have told you not to play in there — do you not?”

“Yes, sir,” said Tom; and he hung down his head.

“Well, Tom,” said his pa-pa, “I will for-give you this time, because you told me the truth, and

did not wait for me to ask. But if you had tried to make me think Puss spilled the ink, I should have had to whip you hard.

“And, more than this, my dear child, if I had not seen you, and had not found you out at all, God saw you, all the time, and He would hear, if you told a lie. Did you think of that, Tom?”

“Yes, pa-pa, I did, and that was what made me want to come and tell you.”

It was well for Tom that he did

think of this. It would be well for us all, at all times, to feel that God can see all we do, and hear all we say.

XXI.

THE SAD NEWS.

MAM-MA soon be-gan to grow strong and well a-gain, so that she sat up all day, all but an hour or so; and Rose, and Tom, and Ned could come in-to her room as much as they want-ed to; and that was a-bout all the time they were at home from school. Ned was there most all day, but he liked to go down and talk to Ruth some-times.

Aunt-y Bates, as the chil-dren called her, had to go home now, for a child of her own was sick, and she had to go to take care of him.

But Mrs. Dale could spare her, for Jane knew how to tend a ba-by; she had ta-ken care of Ned, and of Tom, too, when they were wee lit-tle things.

The ba-by was now more than three weeks old, and she grew fast. Some-times mam-ma let Rose sit down in her low chair,

and hold ba-by on her lap; and then Rose was as proud and happy as she could be.

It would have been just the best time that Rose ev-er knew, if it were not for one thing, that made them all feel sad.

This sad thing was, that their kind Uncle Will was not at all well.

He had had a cough for some time, and as the cold days came on, he grew worse and worse.

Each day, when Mr. Dale came

home, the first thing his wife would ask was, "How does Will seem to-day?"

And Rose knew, by her pa-pa's face, that he did not think he was a-ny bet-ter.

At last, one day, when Rose and Tom got back from school, they found their pa-pa at home. He was in their mam-ma's room, talk-ing with her, and Rose and Tom could not go in, for the door was fast.

Af-ter some time, pa-pa came

to the door, and called the children. He gave them a kiss, and let them come in.

Rose saw that her mam-ma had been cry-ing, and she said, "What is the mat-ter, dear mam-ma? Are you sick?"

"No, my dear," said her pa-pa; "mam-ma is not sick, but she has had bad news."

Rose and Tom stood still to hear what it was.

"The doc-tor says that Un-cle Will must go to the South, where

it is warm, or he can nev-er be well a-gain. He is to go at once, by sea, and Aunt Kate is to go with him."

"Not be-fore Christ-mas, pa-pa! They are to come here Christ-mas, you know!"

"But they must give it up now, dear, for the doc-tor says Un-cle Will must be off in the next steam-ship, next week."

Rose and Tom cried, "O!" in a sad tone in-deed. It was sad for them to give up the nice vis-it,

that they thought so much of, from their dear friends; but it was worse to think how ill their kind un-cle must be.

“And will I-da go in the big steam-ship, too?” asked Tom.

“No, dear; our plan is to keep I-da here while her pa-pa and mam-ma are gone.”

The chil-dren all gave a shout, as they heard this. “O, that will be nice! We shall be so glad to have I-da live here.”

“You love to have I-da with

you, but you know, my dear children, she has nev-er been here with-out her mam-ma.

“She will miss her pa-pa and mam-ma sad-ly, I know, poor little thing! Will you all bear this in mind, and not be vexed with her, if she should fret and cry?”

“Yes, mam-ma; I am sure we could not be vexed with I-da,” said Rose.

“Do not be too sure, my love. I know you would not say that you love I-da bet-ter than you

love your own broth-ers; yet you know you are not kind to them *all* the time."

Rose hung her head. "I don't see how it is, mam-ma; I am sure I love them, but the cross words slip right out, and then I feel bad, and wish I had not said them."

"There is but one way to help it, my dear, and that is, to ask God to make you kind, in all your words and ways.

"There is a prayer in the Bi-ble that is a good one for us all to

use," said pa-pa; "shall I tell you the words of it? Will *you* try to learn it, Tom?"

Rose and Tom stood by their pa-pa, while he said the prayer for them to learn. This was it:—

"Set a watch, O Lord, be-fore my mouth; keep the door of my lips."

Lit-tle Ned stood by, and this made him smile. "A watch 'fore my mouf," said he; "that's fun-ny."

"So I am to teach you, too, my lit-tle man," said pa-pa; "well, come here, then."

“Now, Ned, this verse does not mean a watch like yours or mine, that is to tell the time.”

Here Ned gave a proud look at his watch, for he had kept it yet, and had it on that day. He liked to hear his pa-pa say, “A watch like yours or mine.”

“What sort of a watch does it mean, pa-pa?” said Tom.

“A watch that keeps *guard*, my son. We call Tray a watch-dog, when he stays round the house at

night, and barks to let us know if he hears a step.

“In town, a watch-man goes a-bout the streets at night, to see that bad men do not break in-to a-ny house, or hurt those who may pass by.

“When troops are in camp, or in a fort, they set some men outside, to walk up and down, and keep watch, so that no one can go out or come in. These men are called the Watch.

“Now you can see what the

verse means. We ask God to set a watch, to keep the door of our lips, so that no bad words, no cross or un-kind words, may have a chance to come out. We do not want to speak a-ny words which God would not like to hear."

"How can God set a watch be-fore our mouth, pa-pa?" said Tom.

"He can put His grace in our hearts, to help us to keep our lips shut, when we ought not to speak; that is the way, I think; but He

may help us in some oth-er way, of which we do not know."

"You may be sure of this, dear lit-tle ones; God can, and He will, help us to serve and please Him, if we ask Him with all our hearts.

"Now say the verse for me once more, and then I must go."

So Rose and Tom said the verse, and Ned tried to say it, too.

XXII.

COM-ING AND GO-ING.

AUNT KATE and Un-cle Will came out to Brook-side the day be-fore they were to sail, to say, Good by, and bring dear lit-tle I-da.

Poor Aunt Kate could not keep a sad look off from her face, for this was the first time she had had to part with her dear child; and she had more to make her sad;

she could not but have some fear that I-da's pa-pa might not get well.

Lit-tle I-da was too young to know what it all meant. She did not know much a-bout a long time.

When it was near time for them to leave her, her mam-ma said, "I-da, dear, will you stay with aunt-y, and Rose, and the boys, and be a good girl till mam-ma and pa-pa come back?"

"O, yes," said the lit-tle one, "I be good girl! I loves Rose, and

aunt-y, and Tom, and my Ned, too ! ”

“ Dear pet,” said Aunt Kate, with tears in her eyes, “ what *will* mam-ma do with-out you ? ” And she held her in her arms, and gave her a long kiss, as if she could not let her go.

I-da felt sor-ry to see her mam-ma cry ; she did not know what it was for. She did not know what a long, long time it must be, before her dear mam-ma could hold her and kiss her a-gain.

Then her pa-pa took her in his arms. He could not speak, but he kissed her, o-ver and o-ver a-gain. He did not know that he should ev-er see his ba-by a-gain, on earth.

Then they bade all Good by — all but Mr. Dale; he was to go with them to the steam-er, and see them off.

When I-da stood with the children to see them start, she be-gan to feel that she was to be left. She tried not to cry, for she had

told her mam-ma she would be a good girl.

But the tears were in her eyes, as she called out, "Pa-pa and mam-ma come back pit-ty soon! Good by!"

When they drove out of sight, Rose and Tom led I-da back to the house; she kept say-ing, in a sad voice, "Pa-pa and mam-ma will come pit-ty soon — *won't* they?"

"Yes, dear; some day not far off, I hope," said her aunt-y;

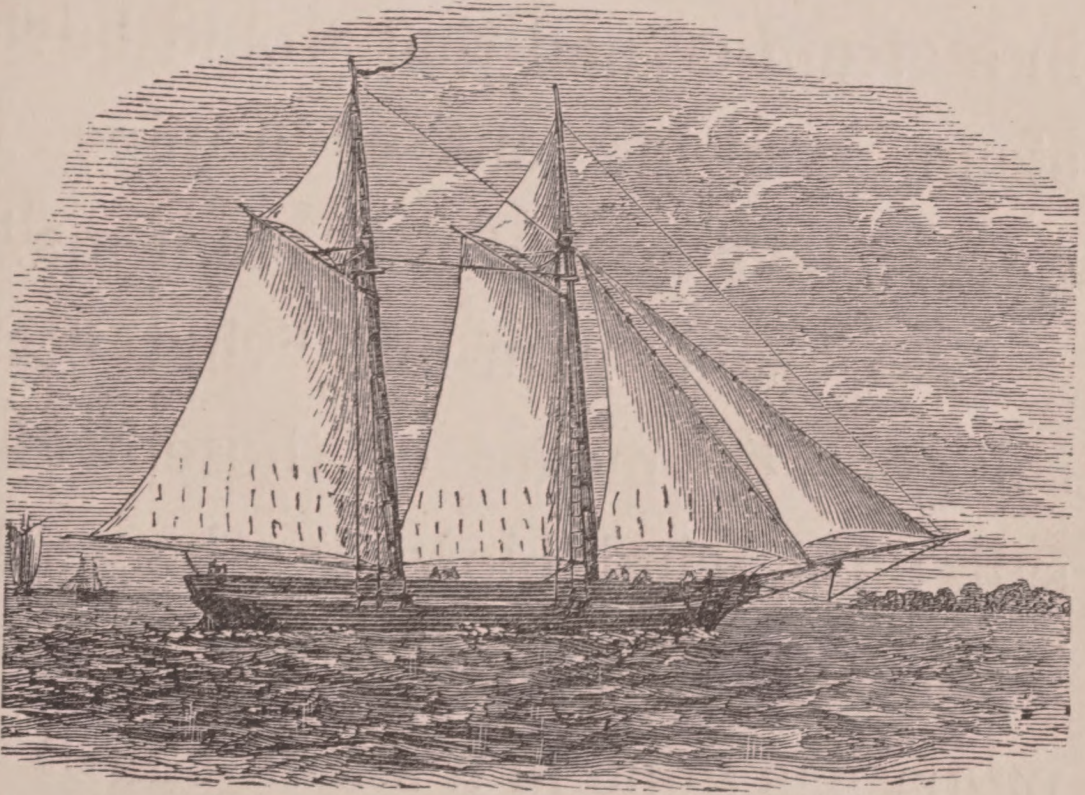
“come, now, love, let us go and see ba-by Bell.”

Rose and the boys did their best to cheer I-da, and keep her from cry-ing for her mam-ma.

I-da did not fret; that is, she was not cross; but for some days, in the midst of her play, she would run and look down the road, and ask, “Is my mam-ma com-ing *now* ? ”

Then they would say, “Not yet, dear,” and try to call her off, and make her think of some-thing else.

One day, Tom had a picture book in his hand, to show I-da pictures.



“O, see!” said he; “here is a ship like that your pa-pa and mam-ma have gone in, I-da!”

Rose came to look. "O!" said she, "I don't be-lieve that is the same kind. Pa-pa said they went in a steam-er, and that would have steam com-ing out of a pipe, I guess; let's go and ask mam-ma."

"No," said mam-ma, "that ves-sel goes by means of those wide sails; the wind blows it a-long; it is a sail-ing ves-sel. But I-da's pa-pa has gone in a steam-ship."

But they will meet ves-sels like those you see in the pic-ture, of-ten. I dare say there may be

some near them now, as they rush on o-ver the wa-ter.

Lit-tle I-da took the pic-ture, and sat still a long time to look at it. She liked to see what her pa-pa and mam-ma had in sight.

XXIII.

TALK A-BOUT CHRIST-MAS.

WHEN the trunk, with I-da's clothes, came, there was a large box set in-to the hall at the same time.

Rose and Tom thought it held some more of I-da's things, for which there was no room in the trunk.

But when their mam-ma came to un-pack the trunk, and put

I-da's lit-tle frocks and things in some draw-ers, she did not call for the big box.

“Mam-ma,” said Tom, “there is a box with more things in it, down in the hall; shall I go and ask Mike to bring it up?”

“O, no,” said his mam-ma, “there are no clothes in that box; and it is not in the hall now.”

Tom ran to peep o-ver the rails. It was gone; that was a fact.

“Why, mam-ma, what was in it? and why did it come with I-da's things?”

Aunt Kate packed it, but I cannot let you know what is in it un-til next week."

"Next week! O, then I know," cried Rose; "it is some-thing for Christ-mas!"

Rose was right in her guess. Aunt Kate had put some Christ-mas gifts for her dear lit-tle girl in that box, to make her glad when she would be far a-way.

And she had put some-thing in it, too, for each of the chil-dren, as we shall see.

“What is Kist-mas, mam-ma?” asked lit-tle Ned; and I-da looked up as if she would like to know, too.

Mam-ma had just put the last things up, and sent the trunk out.

She sat down to take ba-by Bell, and said, “Come here by me now, dar-lings, and I will try to tell you what Christ-mas is.

“It is the birth-day of our dear Lord Je-sus Christ.

“Does I-da know what a nice time she had on her birth-day?”

I-da smiled, and said, "Yes."

"Mam-ma made it a hap-py day, be-cause she loves you so much. Next month, Rose's birth-day will come; then we will try to have a hap-py day, be-cause we love *her*.

"So, on the day when our dear Lord was born, we are glad, and sing, and give nice gifts to each oth-er, and to the poor.

"We are glad that our Lord was born, a lit-tle child, on that day; and we make it a hap-py

day, be-cause we love Him, and He loves us."

"Mam-ma, please tell us a-bout when Je-sus was born," said Tom.

So mam-ma told them the dear old sto-ry which you all love to hear.

How to the Vir-gin Ma-ry a lit-tle babe was giv-en, who was the ho-ly Son of God.

And a bright an-gel came down to earth, and told this good news to some men who kept their sheep, out in the fields, that night.

And, as soon as he had told them, more bright an-gels came and sang a hap-py song, for joy that Christ the Lord was born, to save men from their sins.

And then the men who kept the sheep, when they had heard the good news, and the song of joy, went at once to see the ho-ly child.

And they came in haste, and found Him, ly-ing in a man-ger.

For, though he was Lord of all, yet for our sake he be-came poor.

I-da and Ned were too young



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to know all that this sto-ry means, but they loved to hear it, and stood still till it was told.

“Now, Rose, get your Bi-ble pic-ture book, and show them the pic-ture of this ; and be still now, dear ones ; ba-by wants to go to sleep.”

XXIV.

CHRIST-MAS.

THE week af-ter I-da came, there was no school, for it was so near Christ-mas that the lit-tle ones could not keep still, for joy; and Miss El-la had a good deal to do, and did not want to keep school then.

It was well that Rose and Tom were at home, for they could help take care of I-da and Ned.

And then there was so much to do! Rose, and Tom, and Ned each want-ed to have a gift for Ruth, and for Jane, and for Mike, and O-ney.

Their pa-pa gave them each a dol-lar to spend for Christ-mas, and they had long talks with mam-ma a-bout what they should get; and each day, when pa-pa went to town, they held him by the coat, out in the hall, to give him some er-rand, which he must be sure not to for-get!

“Have you spent all your money, chicks?” said pa-pa, one day.

“Not quite all, pa-pa; I have some more things to get yet,” said Rose.

“You must not forget to keep some to put on the plate, for the poor, Christ-mas day, when we go to church.”

Rose and Tom gave each other a look. “But, pa-pa, if we do, we can-not get a-ny thing for Ned or for I-da.”

“Well, dears, I think you may

feel quite sure that Ned and I-da will have some nice gifts.

“You may do as you choose with your own mon-ey; I dare say it would be more fun for you to buy toys for the lit-tle ones; but do not for-get that our dear Lord says, that what we give to the poor we give to Him.”

“We *ought* to give to Him on His birth-day,” said Tom.

“Yes, we ought,” said Rose.
“Tom, let us keep all the rest of our mon-ey to take to church.”

“And I will take *my* mon-ey to church,” said Ned.

Christ-mas came at last. No need to call and shake lit-tle folks, to wake them up, on that morning!

As soon as they got their eyes o-pen, they be-gan to shout, “Mer-ry Christ-mas!” “Mer-ry Christ-mas!” so loud that all in the house could hear.

I-da sat up in her crib with a smile when she heard Rose and Tom say this; as for Ned, his eyes

were as big as stars, and as bright, when he knew that the happy day was come.

Ba-by Bell heard the sounds of joy, and she o-pened her blue eyes, and put her fist in her mouth, as if she thought, "I must not cry to-day, for it is Mer-ry Christ-mas."

So she lay there while mam-ma was dress-ing, and un-til Jane had the chil-dren dressed, and came to take her.

When the chil-dren were read-y, they ran down to the par-lor.

They knew that *some-thing* that they would like to see was in their pa-pa's room, back of the par-lor; but it was of no use to try the door, for it would not o-pen till all were there.

Soon pa-pa came, and rang a bell; then up came Ruth, and Mike, and O-ney, who had been told they must be sure to come; and down came mam-ma, with ba-by, and Jane.

Then pa-pa said, "Who will sing a Christ-mas hymn for us?"

Then the chil-dren, with mam-ma's voice to help, sang this lit-tle hymn : —

“ Lit-tle chil-dren, can you say
Why you're glad on Christ-mas Day?
Lit-tle chil-dren, can you tell
Why you hear the sweet church bell?
Can you tell me who was born
Ear-ly on the Christ-mas morn?

“ All at once we make re-ply,
We are glad, and we know why ;
'Tis the birth-day of our King,
And we our lit-tle gifts will bring.
Christ was born on Christ-mas Day ;
There-fore we are glad and gay.”

When this hymn was sung, the door of pa-pa's room o-pened ; and what did they see ?

The ink and pa-pers were all gone from pa-pa's ta-ble, and a fine, tall Tree grew right up in the mid-dle of it.

The room was shut up dark, but the Tree was full of small wax lights, which lit up all the pret-ty things that were on it and under it.

What a shout the young ones gave, as they ran up close to see the Tree! Ba-by Bell put up her lip to cry, at the noise, but she did not; she just put her fist in her mouth, in-stead.

Then pa-pa stood by the Tree, and be-gan to take things off, one by one, and call out the name that was on each.

“What was there for Rose? What was there for lit-tle I-da, and for the boys?” you cry.

O, dear me! I wish I had kept a list of all that was on the Tree, for each one! But I am sure I can-not tell you all.

I know what there was for Rose, from Aunt Kate; it was a box, with a key to wind it up; and

when it was wound, it would begin and play a tune, and then another, and another. O, how pleased all the children were with the sweet sounds!

Tom had a box of tools from his Uncle Will. Such a dear little hammer, and saw, and file, and gim-lets, and all he would want to work with!

Ned had a great box of blocks, that would join with a sort of hinge, and stay just as he put

them ; these were from Un-cle Will, too.

Then from his pa-pa and mam-ma he had a train of cars, with an en-gine, and a box of nice can-dy ; and Jane gave him a dog that would bark ; and O, I can-not tell the rest.

As for lit-tle I-da, she was as hap-py as a queen. She had a nice, new doll, with a sweet face, and nice clothes, to put on and take off ; and a cra-dle, to rock her doll in ; and a dear lit-tle cab, from

her aunt-y, to draw it a-bout in ; and a great big book, full of gay pic-tures, from her pa-pa.

O, I must not for-get to tell you what a nice lit-tle stove Rose had for one of her gifts. It had a bright tea-ket-tle on it, and pots and pans, to cook all that the dolls could eat—her own dolls, and I-da's, too !

Tom had a book, too, that pleased him ver-y much ; and a fine top that would hum ; and some oth-er things.

Then there were gifts for Ruth and Jane, and for Mike and his wife, and for mam-ma, and for pa-pa him-self.

“And none for ba-by Bell?”
Why, to be sure there were some for her.

Let me see! She had a dear lit-tle white silk hood, from her Aunt Kate, to wear to church; for she was to go to church soon, you know, to be bap-tized.

And she had a large sil-ver dol-lar, with a hole in it, to hang round her neck; and a coral and bells.

“Now,” said pa-pa, “we must leave these things here, and have prayers, and then eat our breakfast, or we shall not get to church in time.”

But I must not tell you more of this hap-py day, for this chap-ter is too long now.

And I can-not put a-ny more in-side the cov-ers of this book; if I do, it will make it too *fat*, as you would say.

What shall I do? I de-clare, I shall have to make one more book,

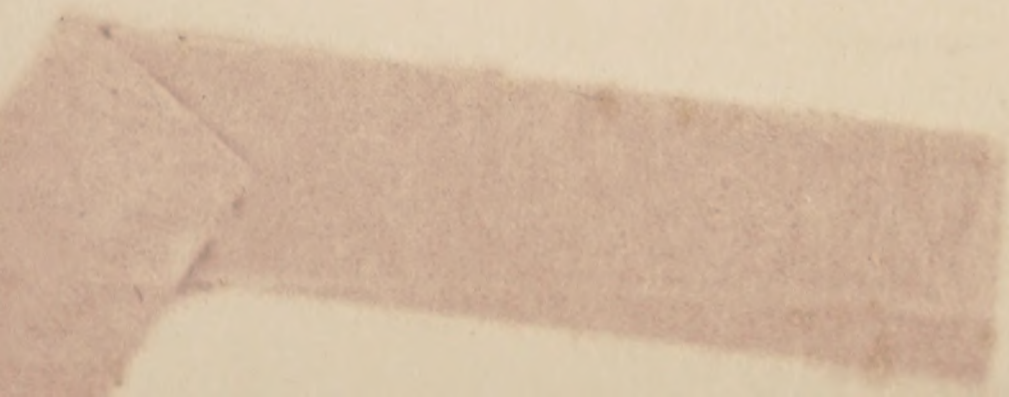
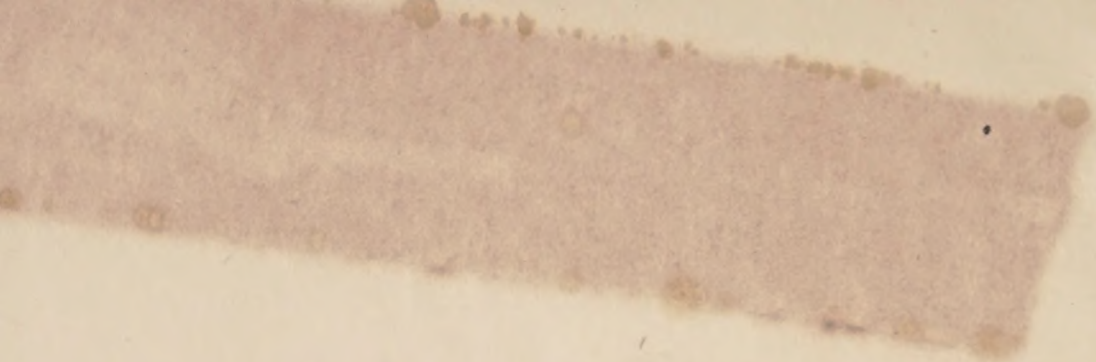
for I am sure you will want to know if I-da's pa-pa got well, and



if ba-by Bell grew to be a big girl,
and a great deal more a-bout Rose,
and Tom, and Ned.

“Dear ba-by Bell!” said Rose;
“she is the best gift we have had
this year!”

And mam-ma said, “I think so,
too.”





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